



# GET READY, SANTA BARBARA!

## Home & Family Awareness

### Sustainability— Different Perspectives on Disaster Recovery Pt. 4

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#### Upcoming Issue in MONTH 2015



Yes, Summer is coming and with it we want to share a few vacation travel do's and don'ts to help you plan your upcoming fun time with family and friends.

#### 2015 Topics

I am not sure who said it but, "Perspective is everything". It is important to recognize that not everyone within a community will have the same perspective or understanding of disaster recovery. There are perspectives of the individual and of community economics that need to be taken into account.

The individual perspective is important because as a community starts its recovery, most people are recovering emotionally, and this takes place at a slower pace than the external, community recovery. Communities respond quickly and with increasing resolve to reestablish utilities, provide access, and create reconstruction policies. Individuals experience a short period of cohesion, during which people come together to help and comfort each other, followed by a longer period of disillusionment as personal, family, job, insurance and disaster assistance issues take their toll. This creates a disconnect between community recovery and individual recovery that leads to frustration, misunderstanding and disillusionment.

Similarly, there is an economic perspective that differs from both that of the community and the individual. It is this economic perspective that highlights the interrelationship and interdependency between local governments and the business community. Businesses, from small mom-and-pop to big box national chains, are primarily concerned with minimizing their down time. The businesses often reach out to their employees to help them recover as individuals, because they need them as employees to help manage the business recovery. People forced to stand in line for water and ice, insurance appointments, and disaster assistance find it difficult to return to work to help their "other family" at the same time.

There is also an increased reliance of business upon local government. Without access to their facilities or power and water to run equipment and bathrooms, business recovery is hindered. Conversely, the longer it takes for businesses to recover, the greater the problems for local government (e.g., unemployment, loss of sales tax, loss of business services). In New Orleans, after Katrina, the economy struggled to recover in the absence of decisions regarding the repair of levees, utilities, and transportation services and the uncertainty related to issues such as building regulations, the availability of insurance, and access to education. The lack of housing, employees, consumers, and production capacity further stifled the economy. As a result, city revenues continued to decline, causing layoffs and further restricting services when they were most needed. Thus, the post disaster environment can create a cycle of decline that is difficult to break.

Everyone in the community has a stake in disaster recovery and the differing perspectives and interdependencies of individuals, government, and business can create conflicts over priorities and timing. So it is important to look at ways to mitigate for any disaster now. Next month we will look at obstacles to disaster recovery.



Except from [Holistic Disaster Recovery](#)  
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May  
Defensible  
Space

June  
Vacation  
Safety

July  
Water  
Safety

August  
Back to  
School

September  
Business  
Continuity

October  
Workplace  
Violence

# Defensible Space—Ready, Set, Go!

## What is Defensible Space?

Defensible space is the area around a structure that is free of flammable plants and objects. Defensible space creates a zone around the structure that provides a key point of defense from an approaching wildfire, while allowing firefighters to operate safely to help protect your structure.

Defensible space must be wide enough to prevent direct flame impingement and reduce the amount of radiant heat reaching the structure. Defensible space distances vary throughout the City of Santa Barbara, depending on the High Fire Hazard Zone where you reside and the slope of your property.



## Steps to Create Defensible Space

1. Determine your defensible space area. This varies from 30 to 150 feet, or greater if property has significant slopes.
2. Provide 30 feet of "Lean, Clean, and Green" landscaping. Lean means having a limited amount of plant material in the area. Clean means no accumulation of any dead material. Green means keeping plants in this area healthy, irrigated, and green.
3. Remove all dead vegetation within the defensible space area. This includes dead trees and shrubs, dead branches lying on the ground or still within living plants, dried grasses, weeds, dropped needles and leaves.
4. Break up continuous dense cover of shrubs and trees. Break up by providing a separation between plants or small groupings of plants.
5. Remove "ladder fuels". Vegetation that allows fire to move from lower growing plants to tree canopies is referred to as "ladder fuel". Remove ladder fuels by providing a vertical separation of 3 times the height of the lower vegetation layer.

*"Wildfires are part of our environment. Our challenge, and what we must do, is to change the way we understand, prepare and react to wildfires in our community. The most important person in protecting your life and property is not the firefighter, but yourself."*

*Fire Chief Andrew DiMizio  
Ready, Set, Go!  
2010*



6. Keep vegetation clear along all driveways and streets. Vegetation along these areas should be pruned and thinned to a vertical height of 14 feet. All flammable vegetation to a horizontal distance of 10 feet should be removed.

Note: Do not plant high hazard plants such as Acacia, Cedar, Cypress, Eucalyptus, Juniper, Pine, and Pampas grass in your landscape. Special attention should be given to the use and maintenance of these high hazard plants if they already exist in your landscape. These existing plantings should be properly maintained and not allowed to be in mass plantings that could transmit fire to any structure.

## Create a Personal Wildfire Action Plan

A Personal Wildfire Action Plan must be prepared with all members of your household well in advance of a fire.

Each household's plan will be different, depending on your situation.

Once your plan is finished, rehearse it regularly with your household. Keep it in a safe and accessible place for quick implementation.

## Six "P's" To Remember

- ☐ People and pets
- ☐ Papers, phone numbers, and important documents
- ☐ Prescriptions, vitamins, and eyeglasses
- ☐ Pictures and irreplaceable memorabilia
- ☐ Personal computers (information on hard drive, disk, or memory stick)
- ☐ Plastic (credit cards, ATM cards) and cash

This article is an excerpts from the City of Santa Barbara Fire Department' Ready, Set Go! Brochure, which can be accessed by [clicking here](#).

## Stella's Corner – Lessons Learned—Weed

Recently we stopped in Weed, California, a small town on Highway 97. Weed is nestled near the base of Mt. Shasta. In 2014, a wildfire burned over 100 homes, two churches, plus lesser structures to the ground. The fire, unfortunately intentionally set, threatened to burn the entire town. With reduced snow pack on the slopes of Mt. Shasta, drought plaguing Lake Shastina and the other lakes in the area, the scenario was set. The winds blew at 45 miles an hour. This means the fire moves at that speed as well. People stepped out of their homes and ran for it. The fire encroached on the entry of the cemetery. Firefighters established and then held a line, but it was very close. A drive around Weed and the Highway 97 corridor in that area shows the devastation of a fast moving and very hot fire.

### 100 FEET FOR SAFETY

With the early onset of what promises to be one of the worst fire seasons ever, creating a defense around your home will help protect yourself, your family, and your possessions. It will create a safer perimeter in which firefighters can work. Protection of the people who work to protect us and our property cannot be ignored. Think of them as extended family members as they assist us, are ready twenty four hours a day, seven days a week. They do their jobs and we need to do ours.

The area nearest your home vitally determines

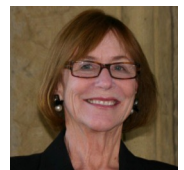
whether you make it or not in fire. Take the perimeter walk. Look at what's leaning against the exterior walls of your structure. Although it is handy to have your firewood stacked artfully next to the back door of your home, that pile of firewood represents a lot of fuel should it burn. Look for building materials: old studs from construction you intended to recycle into another function but have not, brooms, wooden yard furniture, bags of mulch or chips. Look for anything combustible including charcoal, charcoal lighting fluid, propane tanks, as well as gasoline for the yard tools. Is your side yard where you store a couple of old tires? They burn hot and for a long time.

Pluses for the areas nearest your home include some paving, brick, concrete or gravel. Clear weeds, dying and dead vegetation including trees. [Xeriscaping](#) can be lovely and beneficial by reducing fuel for fire. Have a look on-line for suggested plantings.

Have your family and plan in place. Be ready to go should you get the call, or if you see you and your family may be at risk.

The required distance for creating defensible space around structures is 100 feet. Give them 100 feet. It's the least we can do, and it is the requirement.

If you would like to contribute to this column, please contact Yoli McGlinchey at [ymcglinchey@santabarbaraca.gov](mailto:ymcglinchey@santabarbaraca.gov)

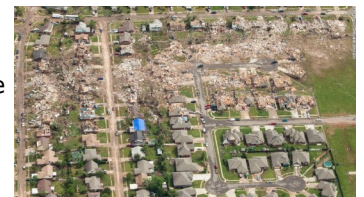


Stella Larson,  
Mesa Resident

## Disasters— The Tornado Outbreak of May 20, 2013

A tornado outbreak occurred during the afternoon and evening hours of the May 20, 2013, and was the last day of a three-day stretch of significant severe weather from May 18-20. This event also produced the most deadly and devastating tornado of the year for Oklahoma and the United States.

Several supercell thunderstorms developed during early afternoon of May 20th along a dryline in central Oklahoma. One of these storms developed near Chickasha and rapidly intensified, producing a tornado which touched down at 2:56 PM CDT on the west side of Newcastle. The tornado became violent within minutes, then tracked east-northeastward across the city of Moore and parts of south Oklahoma City for about 40 minutes before finally dissipating near Lake Stanley Draper. The tornado caused catastrophic damage in these areas, and was given a maximum rating of EF-5. The tornado claimed 24 lives, injured scores of people, and caused billions of dollars in damage.



Several other tornadoes also occurred in Stephens and Lincoln Counties during the afternoon of May 20. In addition to the tornadoes, large hail and damaging winds caused damage in many areas.

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We're on the Web!

[www.santabarbaraca.gov/oes](http://www.santabarbaraca.gov/oes)

and



## Building a Disaster Kit on a Budget—Helpful Tips

- Don't know what to do with those napkins and plastic forks and spoons you receive at fast food restaurants or with your take-out food? These freebies make great additions to your emergency supply kit.
- Free condiment packets such as mayo, ketchup, jelly or taco sauce can add some flavor to meals during an emergency. Expiration dates vary and aren't usually marked on the packets, so throw them out after a few months or if they are punctured, become hard or are rancid.
- Go veggie! You can save a bunch on your stockpile by bypassing meat products and loading up on canned veggies and fruits. Canned beans are a great option, as they are filling and pack a lot of protein.
- Take a tip from your grandparents and grow and can your own food. A few dollars of seed packets can yield enough canned tomatoes, cucumbers and green beans to last you for months. Look for canning information and supplies online.




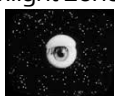






*Do you have an idea you want to share? Maybe you have another way of saving money when building your kit; we want to hear about it. Send your ideas, questions, or comments to: [LiEncinas@SantaBarbaraCA.gov](mailto:LiEncinas@SantaBarbaraCA.gov)*



Liliana Encinas

## Upcoming Events

▶ June 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 	2
3	4	5 	6	7 Nat'l Tourism Day 	8	9
10 	11 Twilight Zone Day 	12	13	14	15 	16 
17	18	19	20 Be a Millionaire Day 	21	22	23 Lucky Penny Day 
24 	25 Tap Dance Day 	26	27	28	29	30 Watering a Flower Day 